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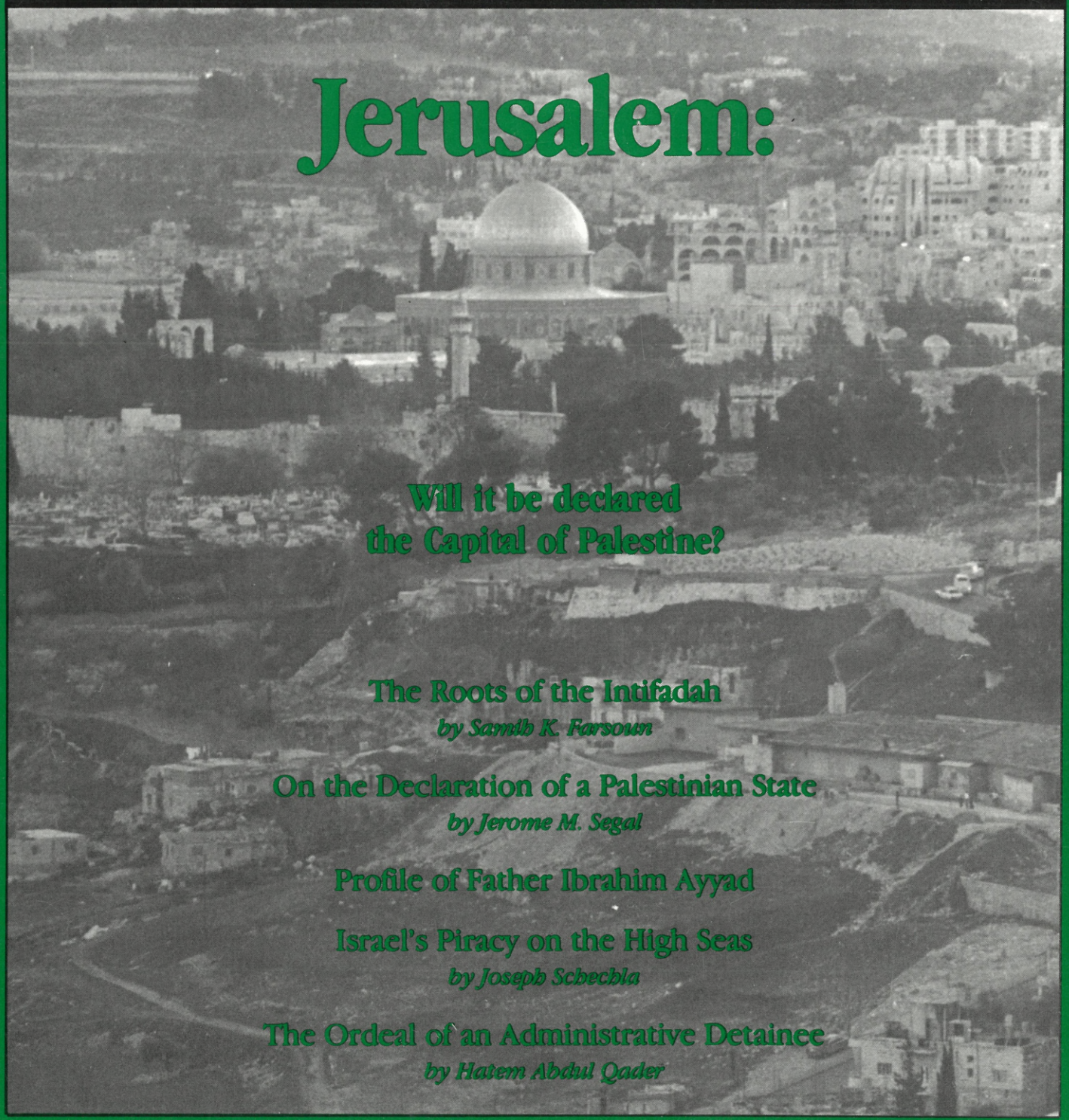
THE RETURN

AN INTERNATIONAL PALESTINIAN MONTHLY MAGAZINE



Jerusalem:

Will it be declared the Capital of Palestine?

The Roots of the Intifadah
by Samih K. Farsoun

On the Declaration of a Palestinian State
by Jerome M. Segal

Profile of Father Ibrahim Ayyad

Israel's Piracy on the High Seas
by Joseph Schechla

The Ordeal of an Administrative Detainee
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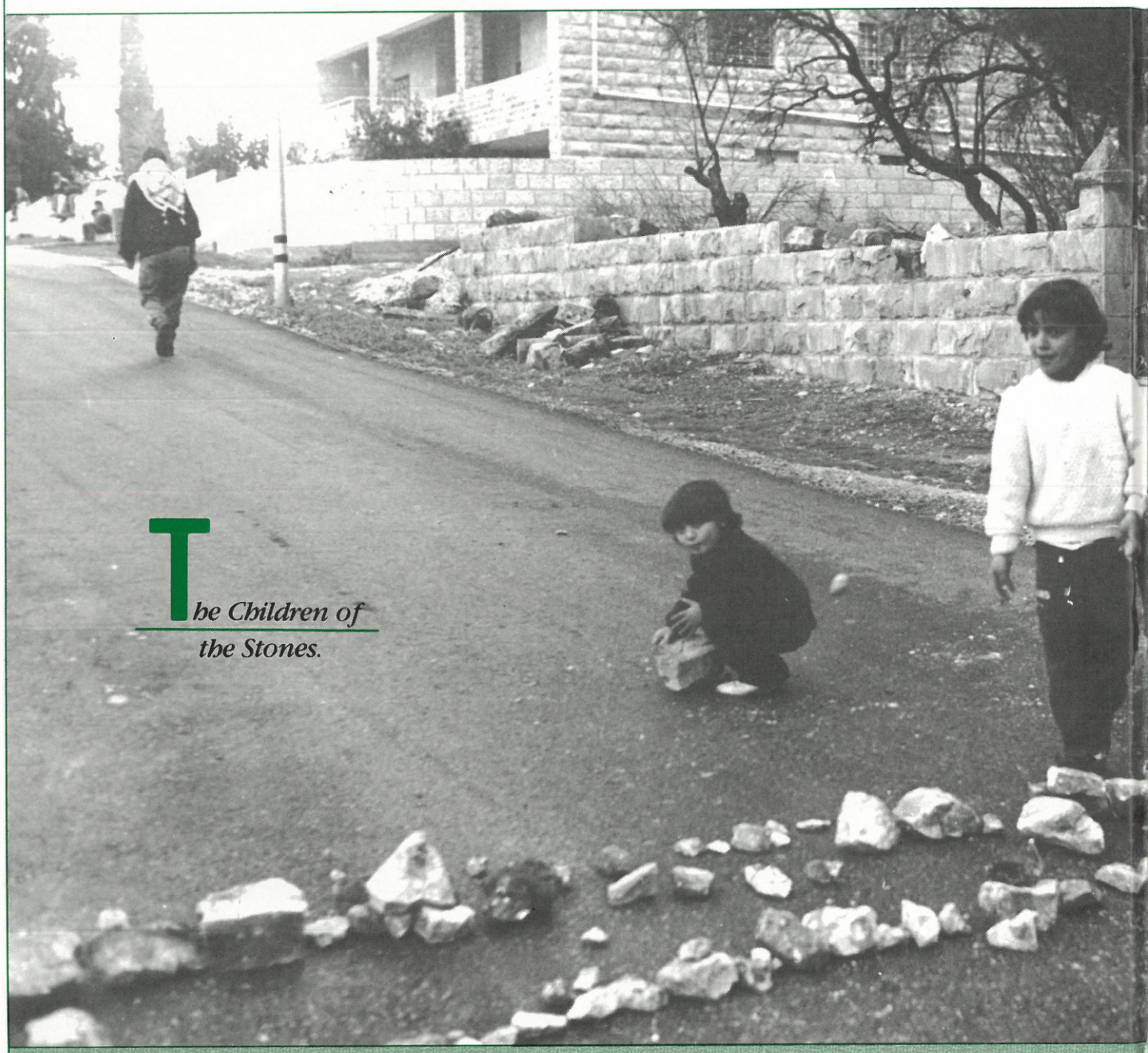

The Children of the Stones.

THE RETURN

AN INTERNATIONAL PALESTINIAN MONTHLY MAGAZINE

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Photo by Michael Keating.

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IT IS ALL UP TO THE PLO

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat with Sheikh Abdul Hamid Al-Sayeh, head of the Palestine National Council.

The Uprising/*Al-Intifadah* is no longer confined to the Israeli-occupied territories. It has become an uprising against the immobility of the past, affecting not only Palestinians living under occupation, but those Palestinians living in the diaspora as well as Arabs with close historic ties to Palestine.

The Uprising has brought about new opportunities and challenges. Jordan's move to sever legal and administrative ties to the West Bank, for example, presents such opportunities and challenges. Palestinians, particularly the leaders of the PLO, have been presented with an opportunity to lead the people of Palestine unrivaled.

The Uprising has demonstrated to Jordan that neither funds nor passports can help it govern the West Bank.

Israel, although the last to admit it, is losing control of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, at an accelerating pace. Its attempts at crushing the Uprising have not succeeded. Israeli jails are full of Palestinian political prisoners. Israeli soldiers have broken the bones and backs of Palestinian civilians, but to no avail. The policy of deporting Palestinians and demolishing their homes has done little to break the spirit of the *Intifadah.* To the contrary, those affected have become more determined than ever to rid themselves of Israel's occupation. Israeli bullets have created martyrs and rekindled the fighting spirit among Palestinians. The conclusion that Israel is bound to reach is similar to Jordan's: It can no longer govern the Occupied Territories without paying an unbearable price.

Nine months into the *Intifadah,* which is continuing with admirable and astounding strength, it is up to the PLO, as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, to translate the victories and the sacrifices of the *Intifadah* into an unstoppable political offensive.

The PLO should declare a provisional government with East Jerusalem as its capital and Chairman Yasser Arafat as its head. This provisional government should include cabinet ministers living inside and outside of the Occupied Territories.

This new Palestinian provisional government should assume all the responsibilities of a full-fledged government. More importantly, it should embark on a political initiative aimed at finding a peaceful resolution to the Palestine question.

Undoubtedly, there will always be those who cry foul and threaten to do this and that. However, as a people who prides itself in its adherence to the principles of democracy, we should let the majority decide. Unanimity is a defunct principle of the past.

If the PLO fails to grasp the current opportunities presented and does not live up to the challenges, then the losers will be none other than the Palestinians themselves. On the other hand, if Israel turns aside the Palestinian overtures for peace, it will have to bear the consequences of its actions. After all, the Palestinian people are growing stronger by the day.

Bishara A. Bahbah
Editor-in-Chief

A WORD FROM THE PUBLISHER

THE U.S. MUST REASSESS ITS POLICIES

BY RAYMONDA TAWIL

Recent developments on the Palestinian-Israeli front appear likely to change the way maps of the region are drawn. Jordan has declared that it will sever its legal and administrative links with the West Bank which, in effect, leaves the PLO to fill the vacuum.

Palestinians from all walks of life appear confident and pleased with Amman's decision. One influential Palestinian told me, "I feel that the Palestinian state is close at hand."

Amman's decision marks the collapse of the Jordanian option upon which Israel's Labor Party leader Shimon Peres has wagered. It also lays to rest any faint hope that the Camp David option upon which Shamir has bet, could be resurrected. The Israelis are now confronted with one choice and that is the Palestinian option spearheaded by the PLO, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The *Intifadah* has changed many equations. Prior to the *Intifadah,* we had 40 years of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Now, we have the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Prior to the *Intifadah,* Israel and the United States ignored the Palestinian factor. Today, willy-nilly, they have to face it and deal with it.

The United States must now reassess its policies concerning the Palestinians. U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz himself declared that King Hussein's move will strengthen the hand of the PLO. What is happening today in the West Bank and Gaza is slowly convincing the Americans of the inevitability of dealing with the PLO. Shultz' repeated visits to Israel, in which Palestinian figures refused to meet with him, affirmed the need for direct dialogue with the PLO.

The PLO's anticipated decision to declare a provisional government in exile is the first step toward the establishment of a Palestinian state. The independence document found in Faisal Hussaini's office, which expanded on the notion of establishing a provisional Palestinian government, is in line with the PLO's strategic thinking.

The public emergence of the independence document is reminiscent of what happened in Algeria and Vietnam when independence was proclaimed before the withdrawal of foreign forces.

The release of the independence document with all that it entails has raised the morale of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories and given them a sense that the settlement is near. The expected decision to declare a provisional government in exile in the upcoming special session of the Palestine National Council will help strengthen and tighten the ranks among opposing groups within the Palestinian resistance.

The pressure is on both Israel and the United States to recognize the existence of a Palestinian state. The vigor and duration of the *Intifadah* is convincing even the skeptics that we are at the crossroads of a new beginning—the beginning of Palestinian independence and the reclamation of the usurped rights of the Palestinian people. ■

Raymond Tawil is publisher of The Return.

THE ROOTS OF THE INTIFADAH

BY SAMIH K. FARSOUN

The Intifadah is of historic importance because it overcomes all potentially divisive forces in Palestinian society and it unites all the people, including the Palestinians inside Israel. It revitalizes the PLO and regalvanizes Palestinian communities everywhere.

A HISTORIC UPRISING

The Palestinian Uprising against Israeli occupation, the *Intifadah*, is currently in its ninth month. It is lasting far longer than the experts had expected, despite growing hardships for the Palestinian people. Palestinian trade, industry, agriculture, health, education, and travel are all under siege by Israeli occupation authorities. The gross domestic product (GDP) of the Occupied Territories has dropped 25% since last December, and yet, the *Intifadah* continues.

The duration, scope, innovative tactics, and accomplishments of the *Intifadah* make it a historic movement. Indeed, it is the fourth such major movement in defense of a Palestinian homeland. (The first was the 1936-39 revolt against the authorities of the British Mandate, the second was the 1947-48 resistance to the partition, and in 1964-65, the third culminated in the founding of the PLO.) The *Intifadah* is the latest climactic expression of the collective Palestinian will. It is asserting a national consciousness, resisting dispossession, and reclaiming Palestinian political rights. It joins the young and the old, men and women, city dwellers and villagers, Muslims and Christians, the poor and the rich to form a genuine people's movement.

The *Intifadah* is of historic importance because it overcomes all potentially divisive forces in Palestinian society and it unites all the people, including the Palestinians inside Israel. It revitalizes the PLO and regalvanizes Palestinian communities everywhere. It is historic because it reforges a Palestinian political unity around a clear and simple objective: ending the occupation and paving the way for self-determination.

Above all, the *Intifadah* has created a sense of community and discipline among Palestinians under occupation, supplanting the previous fragmentation and anarchy. It has created a new strategy for coordinating civil disobedience with grass-roots institutions. It is providing a *Palestinian* alternative to Israeli occupation—an alternative composed of self-sufficient social, political, and economic systems. It

has rebuilt and restructured the fabric of Palestinian society. Dr. Hanan Mikhail-Ashrawi, dean of Bir Zeit University in Ramallah, said, the *Intifadah's* message to Israel and the rest of the world is that "we [Palestinians] are staying on our land and we are perfectly capable of organizing our own lives."

News reports and eyewitness accounts confirm that the mood of the people has changed radically. Instead of bitter complaints and self-pity for suffering under Israeli occupation, now the people talk about what they are doing to resist occupation. They talk about helping themselves and their communities. From the depths of despair, only a year ago, comes the optimism and activism of the present. It has given the people a new hope for a dignified life free from occupation.

The old political calculus in the region and in the world is gone; there is no return to the status quo ante. The *Intifadah* has thrust forward political realities which can no longer be ignored: Palestinians are here to stay on their own homeland, free and independent.

A Palestinian youth being detained by Israeli soldiers.

Why the Intifadah?

Why and how did this Uprising emerge? The root cause is Israeli colonization of the West Bank and Gaza. The Occupied Territories have been systematically subjugated into the status of an *internal colony* of Israel. The process of maintaining this internal colony is characterized by four major attributes: political suppression, economic exploitation, social de-institutionalization, and ideological and cultural repression.

Political suppression is Israel's most obvious and most well understood method of subjugating the Occupied Territories. Israel simply prohibits any political activities. It arrests or deports political activists, and, in an effort to stifle grass-roots political activity, it metes out collective punishment. Extended curfews are imposed upon villages, towns and refugee camps. Three thousand people have been deported to neighboring countries, thousands of homes demolished, and, out of a total occupied population of 1.3 million, approximately 400,000 people have been arrested—that is almost one-third of the population.

Receiving less media attention is Israel's economic exploitation of the Occupied Territories. Israel confiscates Palestinian land and water resources, degrades Palestinian labor and holds the Occupied Territories as a captive market. Studies indicate that Israel has confiscated 55% of the land of the West Bank and 30% of Gaza's. On this confiscated land, Israel has built 120 colonial settlements, and unabashedly annexed Arab East Jerusalem.

The Occupied Territories has been forced into dependency on and physical integration into Israel's economic infrastructure. Transportation and communication systems have been recast into

Funerals are becoming a daily ritual in Palestinian life: a scene from a funeral in Bethlehem.

Israel's. Water indigenous to the Occupied Territories is confiscated and the Occupied Territories' water system has now been made dependent on Israel's. Israeli settlers in Gaza consume 2,326 cubic meters of water per capita per year. In contrast, Gaza Palestinians consume 123 cubic meters per capita per year—almost one-nineteenth of what the Israeli settlers consume. The Occupied Territories' electricity grid has been reintegrated into Israel's as well.

In short, the occupation aims to choke economic growth and development of local industry, agriculture, and trade. The Occupied Territories are now an Israeli captive market. The West Bank and Gaza import over $800 million worth of Israeli goods per year while their exports into Israel are severely controlled. No trade reciprocity is allowed.

While the Occupied Territories have been turned into the second most important commodity export market for Israel (the U.S. is the first), it has also become a source of cheap, underpaid labor for Israeli construction, service industries, agriculture, and to a lesser extent, manufacturing. Over 120,000 Palestinian workers used to cross into Israel for work every business day.

The colonial processes of economic exploitation have hurt the Palestinian people and depressed their quality of life. Over the two decades of occupation this would have been far more severe had the oil boom in the Arabian peninsula not provided employment for desperate Palestinians and income for their families at home.

The third aspect of the occupation is the process of social de-institutionalization and segregation. An apartheid-like system has been imposed upon the Palestinians. Palestinian workers are not allowed to sleep overnight in Israel. They must often travel for several hours over long distances from their homes in the Occupied Territories, using slow, expensive, and inadequate means of transportation. Once in Israel, most Palestinians are relegated to performing the work that Israelis do not like to do. Israeli occupation authorities have circumscribed the activities of all Palestinian institutions including those dealing with education and research, cultural affairs, economics, labor, and other issues requiring organized activity. They have restricted the movement and coordination of institutional leaders, fragmented their efforts, and have caused the atrophying of institutional structures. The normal delivery of services has been undermined, helping to atomize the Palestinian community.

Finally, the cultural and ideological repression experienced by Palestinians everywhere assaults their identity and their national consciousness. Israeli repression of Palestinian culture and ideologies has reached such extremes as to prohibit painters from painting or exhibiting their works when the four colors of the Palestinian flag are used simultaneously. There is also a great deal of interference in the content of the educational curriculum, especially regarding the history and culture of Palestine and the Palestinian people.

The combination of these four subjugation practices—political repression, economic exploitation, de-institutionalization and segregation, and cultural and ideological repression—in the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza have bred a strong and rising sense of frustration and anger in the Palestinian people. These practices were initiated by Israel's Labor government at the outset of the occupation in 1967. With the victory of the conservative, nationalist Likud coalition in 1977 there was a quantum escalation of this colonization process. Palestinian resistance to any and all aspects of these practices led the Israeli Likud government to institute even more oppressive measures. In 1980-81, the Israelis themselves called this policy the "Iron Fist."

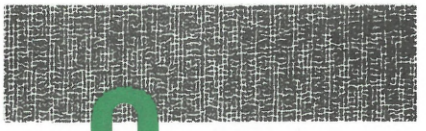
The Iron Fist has a foreign policy aspect to it as well. It led to the incredibly destructive and brutal Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. In the colonization process, the Iron Fist encouraged abuse and humiliation of the Palestinian

people by both the official occupation authorities and the Israeli settlers.

Of course, this fueled the embers of rebellion even further. While the root causes for the *Intifadah* were in place for a long time, the long-term catalyst for the current upheaval began around 1983. A number of factors combined to make the situation unbearable for the Palestinians under occupation. To begin with, the defeat of the PLO and its fragmentation in the 1982 Lebanon war and the massacres of Sabra and Shatila demoralized the Palestinian people. Palestinians everywhere were outraged, but especially those under occupation, those who yearned for an end to their Israeli yoke. Outside help was not forthcoming, and, increasingly, matters had to be taken into one's own hands.

Then the era of the oil boom ended leading to economic setbacks both in the Arab east and among Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza who were dependent on financial remittances from kinsmen working in the oil-producing areas of the Arab world. Prior to 1983, the rate of emigration from the Occupied Territories reached 17 out of 1,000 Palestinians. By 1985 it had dropped to three out of 1,000. With the drop in emigration, there was a corresponding drop in the size of remittances to the Occupied Territories.

The escape valve that used to allow frustrated people out, and money in, was rapidly closing down, and the socioeconomic well-being of the people plummeted precipitously. This created, in the context of a youthful population (in Gaza, for example, 60% of the population is less than 15 years old) volatile conditions. Levels of frustration rose. This can be seen by studying Israeli army statistics about Palestinian "acts of violence."



Out of a total occupied population of 1.3 million, approximately 400,000 people have been arrested—that is almost one-third of the population.

According to these statistics, Palestinians used to average 450 acts of violence per year prior to 1983. By 1986 the average leapt to 5,000 acts of violence per year.

But what exacerbated the situation in 1986 was the initiation of a new reign of terror: Iron Fist II. Israel intensified its efforts to control the visible and escalating Palestinian ferment. In a sense Israel's Iron Fist II provoked the Palestinian rebellion. The climate of Iron Fist II encouraged former General Sharon to move provocatively into Arab East Jerusalem, it increased settler vigilantism, and individual and collective punishment, abuse and humiliation.

The feelings of frustration increased with the growing sense of abandonment by the Arab states in their summit meeting in Amman in 1987—only 40 miles from the Palestinian border. While Palestinian children were being beaten by Israeli troops, the Arab leaders were solemnly declaring that the Arab enemy is Iran, a thousand miles to the east. In the final communiqué, the Palestine question was barely mentioned. This, along with the emergence of the transparent Israeli-Jordanian collaboration in controlling the Occupied Territories, deepened the sense of abandonment.

These factors collectively triggered the explosion of the *Intifadah* in December 1987. In that charged and frustrated climate any incident would have triggered an explosion.

However, the *Intifadah* is remarkable in that it did not explode into random violence. It was not anarchic. Rather it quickly evolved into organized, innovative, community-wide acts of resistance and civil disobedience. The youths who erected barricades in their communities did use stones to defend themselves and their neighborhoods against Israeli troops and vigilante settlers, but they faced heavily armed Israeli soldiers and settlers. Several hundred Palestinians have been killed, thousands more wounded and maimed, and tens of thousands of others detained in desert prisons. The destruction of property, collective punishment, extended curfews, etc., together represent a

See **ROOTS,** *page 36*

TIME TO DECLARE THE STATE OF PALESTINE

BY JEROME M. SEGAL

Earlier this year, I published in the Jerusalem-based *Al-Quds* newspaper a strategy proposal calling on the PLO to declare the existence of the State of Palestine, to transform itself into a provisional government, and to launch a peace offensive designed to induce Israeli troop withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza. The proposal was subsequently reprinted in *The Washington Post,* and since then my ideas have been receiving considerable attention.

Recent events, in particular King Hussein's decision to abandon the Jordanian claim to sovereignty over the West Bank and the discovery of a draft declaration of independence of the State of Palestine in Faisal Hussaini's office, make me believe that it is virtually inevitable that the State of Palestine will be proclaimed unilaterally. The key questions are when and how.

Ironically, one reason that a unilateral declaration of independence and statehood has become inevitable is the fact that the Israeli government has chosen to reveal the existence of the draft declaration of independence that was found. As a result, millions of people around the world, particularly Palestinians living in the Occupied Territories, now see that this idea is real and that it is needed.

Until the notion of a unilateral declaration was put forward, the Palestinian strategy was dominated by an alternative understanding of a declaration of statehood. This view holds that a declaration of statehood is merely a final act. It comes after essentially winning the struggle to bring the state into being. Late in the day, when everything is in place, when negotiations among all the parties are successful, and when everyone agrees to the creation of the state, then the existence of a state is proclaimed. With this approach, a declaration of statehood comes as the conclusion to a successful struggle.

The second view, the one I hold, is that a declaration of statehood is itself a major tool in the struggle. Rather than coming at the end, it comes in the middle of the campaign and is a key factor contributing to the success of the struggle.

The strategy I espouse uses a declaration of statehood as part of the process rather than as the culmination of the process. There are two important roles that would be played by the early declaration of statehood: it would reinfore the Uprising and it would liberate the Palestinian leadership from present constraints.

Reinforcing the Uprising

A declaration of statehood can function as a declaration of independence. In declaring the West Bank and Gaza to be the State of Palestine, the independence of the Occupied Territories from Israel would be formally affirmed. Declarations of independence are not statements of accomplished fact. They are statements of an intent to be independent, and they express a determination to make that intent a reality. They transform the meaning of action; they transform mere protest and resistance into a struggle for independence. Thus, a declaration of independence and statehood would give new meaning to the

Uprising. Rather than being a tactic for pressuring the Israelis to attend an international conference, the Uprising would be an important part of the process of the new state coming into being.

The course of the Uprising will essentially be determined by the lived experiences of the Palestinians within the Occupied Territories. But as human beings, we experience reality through language. Transform the language used for describing reality, and the experience of reality is transformed. When experience is transformed, then social reality is itself transformed.

Once statehood is proclaimed and the West Bank and Gaza are announced to be the State of Palestine, they are no longer Occupied Territories, but an occupied country. To the Palestinians, to the world that watches, and to the Israelis themselves, a struggle to end the occupation of one country by another is very different from an amorphous revolt.

Moreover, the very tactics of the Uprising will crystallize within the framework of statehood. The underground command will be representatives of a government; the population will be citizens. Civil disobedience will be a statement of allegiance to a new state; the flag itself will have new meaning. In short, a declaration of statehood will give the Uprising new and enduring energy and creativity.

Liberating the Palestinian Leadership

When independence and statehood are proclaimed, the PLO should go out of existence. It should be replaced by a provisional government. A provisional government is similar to a government in exile but is not the same thing. A government in exile, by definition, is outside waiting to return. A provisional government is both inside and outside awaiting conditions that will permit free elections and the end to provisional status.

Once statehood is proclaimed and the West Bank and Gaza are announced to be the State of Palestine, they are no longer Occupied Territories, but an occupied country.

With the creation of the Provisional Government of the State of Palestine, the Palestinian struggle can be liberated from the fetters of its own history. Let me be blunt. The Palestinians need a new beginning. And they need it on the organizational level. Nothing illustrates this better than the sorry fate of Bassam Abu Sharif's article.

Undoubtedly with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's approval, Abu Sharif drafted a remarkable document and subsequently had it published under his name in *The New York Times*. This was a creative and courageous act. Yet, if one analyzes the document, one finds that substantively most of what was in it had previously been affirmed by the Palestine National Council (PNC) or by Arafat in his own statements. What made Abu Sharif's paper so new and potentially powerful was its style and tone.

Saying things that had been said before, Abu Sharif spoke in a new voice. He spoke in a voice which could potentially change the political reality in Israel and the United States. For instance, he wrote, "The Palestinians want . . . lasting peace and security for themselves and the Israelis because no one can build his own future on the ruins of another's." Substantively, this is not very different from the Fez principles which have been regularly affirmed by the PNC. Principle seven of the Fez Declaration calls for "guarantees for peace for all states of the region." But psychologically, emotionally, spiritually, Bassam Abu Sharif's words were a new reality. And, thus, politically they were dynamite.

What the Abu Sharif paper demonstrated was that Abu Sharif, and to some extent Arafat, are personally liberated on the tactical level and quite possibly on the human level. But what clearly emerged is that the PLO is not. Before it could even have an impact, high-ranking figures in the PLO were attacking it and denouncing Abu Sharif. In the United States, many commentators focused on the disarray within the PLO and on the fact that Arafat did not sign the piece but allowed Abu Sharif to take the risk. Predictably, this tremendously important essay did not have the impact it could have had.

Several things are illustrated by

the incident. First, Arafat understands that American and Israeli public opinion are the key arenas. Second, he understands the need to achieve psychological breakthroughs among the general public and especially within the Jewish community. Third, the PLO has the talent to do this. Fourth, it is organizationally incapable of implementing this necessary dimension.

Why would a provisional government be any different? First, a provisional government would escape from the PLO's organizational fetters. For example, the new State of Palestine would need a constitution. There would be no need to amend the PLO covenant. The covenant would simply become a historical artifact, the basic document of an organization that no longer exists. The constitution would be written in terms of the moral and political realities of the present, not the fantasies of 1968.

More basically, being the provisional government of a newly proclaimed country would give the Palestinian leadership a very different locus from which to act. For instance, the new government could simply announce a desire to negotiate a peace treaty with Israel. It could name an ambassador to Israel and send him to negotiate.

The new government would be much better positioned in its relations with the United States. For instance, it could immediately denounce terrorism and affirm its desire to live at peace with Israel. Indeed, it could even accept United Nations Resolution 242. Why? Because 242 does not deal with any country by name, it merely asserts the right of all states in the region to live at peace within secure boundaries. As a new state in the region, the State of Palestine would simply insist that this wording applies to it as well.

The new State of Palestine would need a constitution. There would be no need to amend the PLO covenant. The covenant would simply become a historical artifact, the basic document of an organization that no longer exists.

Underlying these possibilities is a psychological reality. The reason the PLO has sometimes been inept in advancing the Palestinian cause is that it really serves two conflicting objectives: a) it seeks to lead the Palestinian people to national self-determination, and b) it seeks to provide the Palestinian resistance and the Palestinian people with a stance of dignity while living in conditions of statelessness and political weakness. It is very hard to satisfy both of these objectives at the same time in an organization which encompasses diverse analyses of political reality.

The strategy I have proposed builds on the unilateral self-assertion of the Uprising. In the Uprising, the Palestinian masses have found a new potency, pride and solidarity. Proclaiming the existence of the state and creating a provisional government raises this element to the international diplomatic level. Once the state is proclaimed and recognized by most of the world, the tension between the need to govern effectively and pragmatically, and the need to retain dignity within a condition of statelessness will be resolved.

In my mind, the issue is not whether to do this, it is when. In particular, should it be done immediately or should it be done a year from now? One can argue either way. A great deal depends on what one expects during the next year given present trends and strategies. If one expects the Uprising to remain strong, believes that a spiral of violence is unlikely, believes that events are not drifting toward right-wing extremism inside Israel, and believes that there is a reasonable chance of a breakthrough in negotiations, then there is no harm in delaying. Since I believe that the facts are otherwise, I say: Do it now!

There is however, one note of caution. A declaration of independence and statehood can strengthen the position of those Israelis calling for annexation of the Occupied Territories and transfer of the Palestinian population. These dangers must be taken seriously. If the declaration of independence is part of a dramatic, decisive and sustained peace initiative, the ability of the Israeli right wing will be checked. But if the Palestinian leadership is again unclear on its commitment to the two-state solution, the door will be open to disaster. ■

Dr. Jerome M. Segal is a research scholar at the Institute for Philosophy and Public Policy, University of Maryland. He is a founder of the Jewish Committee for Israeli-Palestinian Peace.

THE STORY OF AN ANSAR-III SURVIVOR

BY KATE CASA

For several weeks now, Izzedin Aryan has been walking again. He can drive short distances and work two or three hours a day. But if he exceeds his limits he is bedridden with debilitating pain. This is his personal legacy from the Israeli detention camp in the Negev desert known ominously as Ansar-III.

Six months before the *Intifadah* began, I met Aryan in his office at the Balsam Pharmaceutical Company in Ramallah. Head of the Central Committee of the Red Crescent in the West Bank and Gaza, and a member of the Islamic High Council, Aryan was a jolly, hospitable man who spoke easily to a novice trying to understand the meaning of 20 years of occupation. But now, Aryan is stiff and aged for his 52 years. He bends painfully to offer visitors a cup of coffee, and sits in a straight-back wooden chair while his guests are accommodated in the plush furnishings of his salon. Today, his words are measured, more sparse. The contrast of today's words with those of last year, may be the most telling sign of what this occupation and its resulting *Intifadah* mean. This year Aryan's words must remain between the lines.

On the night of January 31, 1988 at 11:00 pm, Israeli soldiers came to the home of Izzedin Aryan and took him away. After spending one night in a bare room at the military governor's headquarters, Aryan was transported to the central military district's main prison in Nablus. According to his detention order, he was to have spent six months in this prison.

In court the next day, the prosecuting attorney told the judge he had a secret file which he had assembled against the defendant. He mentioned Aryan's activities with the Red Crescent Society and his brief detention history. Aryan was detained for one week in 1968 and 79 days in 1979. He was not charged with anything in either of those detentions. Speaking in his own defense, because a curfew prevented his attorney from coming to Nablus to defend him, Aryan himself asked the judge to disclose and explain the charges against him. His request was denied. A week later the judge approved the prosecution's request for six months in administrative detention. Characteristically, the charges were never made public.

Three months passed for Aryan in the Nablus prison in "relative comfort." According to the Israeli military authorities which dictate the conditions of administrative detention, inmates of the Nablus prison may wear civilian clothes, receive visitors, read books and periodicals, purchase filter cigarettes and food from the prison cantina, listen to radios, and even watch television.

Aryan and his fellow detainees had all those privileges until abruptly, at 7:00 am one day, the guards read off a list. Aryan's name was on it. Along with 160 fellow inmates he was told to pack his bag for a transfer. Their hands were tied and they were blindfolded. Thirty to a bus, the men set out. They were given no water and barred from going to the toilet. The soldiers harassed them, and made jokes about Arabs and the PLO.

But perhaps the worst aspect of the trip was being constantly aware of the direction in which the buses were traveling. The inmates could

Ansar-III detention camp. Photo: Roots Collection.

tell from the position of the sun, that for five hours, they were heading south.

After being forced to turn over their clothing, belts, watches, rings and shoelaces, the prisoners were issued uniforms and assigned tents at Ansar-III—in the middle of "no man's land" between Beersheva and Al-Arish. A nearby Israeli settlement called Ketziot has formally lent its name to the camp, but Palestinians call it Ansar after a prison in Lebanon, and another still functioning in Gaza, where detainees are ritually held without charges.

After two months, Aryan's memories remain vivid. He recalls that the prison is divided into five compounds, each 50 by 50 meters surrounded by a fence four meters high. There are paths between the fences approximately two meters wide, where the soldiers patrol, looking in on the detainees through small windows in the burlap which hang over the fences. Each compound contains eight tents of five by ten meters, and each tent houses 28 people.

"It was under those circumstances that they left us to sit and think. To think about why we were there, stripped of all humanity, left with not even the dignity of walking with shoelaces. Why must they take shoelaces? To prevent us from hanging ourselves?" he asked angrily.

Gradually, Ansar-III initiates come to understand the rules. There was no walking between the tents and the fence, there was no running or exercise of any kind, and the list grew daily. An inmates diet consisted of white beans, rice and lentils. There was plenty of bread, Aryan recalls, but often, especially Friday through Sunday, it was hard and moldy. Two 5,000-liter water tanks were filled twice daily, but sometimes the truck would come at noon and again at 2:00 pm, leaving the prisoners little time to empty the tanks before the re-fill, thereby depriving them of the day's full allocation. A water monitor appointed among the prisoners made sure each inmate did not exceed his allocated five minutes in the shower once a week. There was also one piece of soap rationed out daily per tent, and one razor blade to each group of 28 men.

The prisoners who leave Ansar-III always do so with beards. Almost without exception, they leave them. Yes, they are often trimmed and shaped, but they are there nonetheless. According to Aryan, the beards are a fraternal reminder, each time they face themselves in the mirror, of their brothers who remain behind.

On the second day of Ramadan, some of the prisoners began to sing. Aryan recalls:

> The guards came and said those singing would be taken to a cell—which means being handcuffed, tied, and beaten. We refused to tell them who was singing so they made us all come outside and sit on the ground with our legs crossed and our heads down, forbidden to move a muscle. I must have strained something in my back as I felt a serious pain, but I was afraid that if I moved it would cause problems for the others. We were surrounded by guards with sub-machine guns. So for six hours I suffered the pain. Finally, when we were allowed to stand I fell to the ground.

Aryan was taken to the camp doctor on a wooden pallet. He was given pain medication and told he must take it with complete bed rest. Aryan was surprised. He asked the doctor if he knew how the prisoners slept—on wooden pallets

See **ANSAR-III,** *page 36*

TRUCE IN THE GULF AND THE PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI CONFLICT

BY FREDERICK W. AXELGARD

One of the main questions that arises as a result of Iran's acceptance of United Nations Resolution 598 relates to the potential impact of the cease-fire between Iran and Iraq on the Arab-Israeli conflict in general, and the Palestine question in particular.

I find this question to be disturbing. For one thing, it is being asked prematurely. It is far from definite that a serious, abiding settlement of the conflict between Iraq and Iran will occur in the near future. The depth of mistrust and the permanence of the issues separating Iran and Iraq are being underestimated.

But premature or not, there is a much more disturbing aspect to this question. The reaction of the American news media to Iran's acceptance of Resolution 598 is unsettling because, in the very first analysis, too much importance is being attributed to Israel's security. The weight given to Israeli security conveys a most distasteful implication, namely that the deaths of at least one million Iranians and Iraqis are to be viewed primarily as a legitimate sacrifice for Israeli security interests.

The implication is that it might not be too bad for the war to continue.

Such transparent callousness serves well as a reminder of American policy during the early phases of the Gulf war. Indeed, for much of the first four years of the conflict, there was no active American policy to speak of. It seemed—though American officials hotly denied it—that the United States, like Israel, was content to let the two behemoths of the Gulf flail away at each other. The unmistakable turning point in American attitudes came in 1983-84, when Iraq announced its intent to use sophisticated weaponry to attack Iranian oil facilities in the Gulf.

This prospect, rather than abhorrence over the extensive human carnage the war had already produced, was what catapulted Washington out of its complacency. Now, as pride swells within the Reagan administration over the positive outcome of its recent firm stand in the Gulf, it is humbling to speculate how many hundreds of thousands of casualties (and other disasters, like the extensive use of chemical weapons) might have been prevented if humane, rather than primarily materialistic, motives had dictated U.S. policy from the outset of the war.

For the moment, any semblance of nuance has gone out of what had become an interesting debate in Israel about the implications of the Gulf war for that country. Last year there were growing indications that a sizeable minority of serious-minded Israelis had concluded that Iraq is the lesser threat, and that Israeli interests might be served by considering a less automatically hostile policy toward Baghdad. A central thread in the reasoning of this school of thought is that after paying such high human and material costs for its avowed defense of the eastern flank of the Arab world, Iraq might be prepared to follow Egypt's example, moderating its confrontational posture toward Israel rather than risking further bloodletting in an outside adventure.

But this debate seems far removed from the present circumstances. The Gulf war has

Iraqi soldiers. Photo: Iraqi Press Office, Washington, D.C.

been perhaps the primary stimulus in a regional race to stockpile and deploy arsenals of devastating ground-to-ground missiles. Israeli and American sensitivity to this development has peaked in the recent months following China's sale of medium-range missiles to Saudi Arabia and Syria. Particular concern has focused on the more modern and accurate systems being obtained by Damascus.

Moreover, these apprehensions are undoubtedly connected to the demonstrated military advantage Iraq has gained since the beginning of this year. Iraq clearly won its "war of the cities" with Iran this past spring, using its superior missile arsenal to inflict a decisive toll on the already weakened morale of Iran's civilian population. Then, beginning with the incident at the Kurdish city of Halabjah, Iraq's use of chemical weapons produced growing international anxiety even as it forced Iranian troops from one vital stronghold after another.

This chain of events and the

The weight given to Israeli security conveys a most distasteful implication, namely that the deaths of at least one million Iranians and Iraqis are to be viewed primarily as a legitimate sacrifice for Israeli security interests.

Syrian and Saudi missile acquisitions have placed overwhelming emphasis on the ways Iraq could threaten Israel, as opposed to emphasis on the reasons Baghdad should want to avoid further international military involvement. However, this will probably prove to be a false assessment of Iraq's future actions and inclinations, for a whole host of reasons.

First and foremost, a cease-fire is not a settlement. Iraq and Iran have deep and abiding differences, which most likely will keep Baghdad's political and military attention diverted to the east for years to come. Even if this were not the case, war-weariness in Iraq is as pervasive as it is in Iran. Iraqi President Saddam Hussein faces a massive economic and political challenge in rebuilding his country. Economic reforms and small but intriguing political adjustments made in the past two years suggest that the Ba'athist leadership in Baghdad has anticipated the need to focus inward as soon as circumstances should permit.

The Iran-Iraq battlefront. Photo: Iraqi Press Office, Washington, D.C.

Hostility toward Syria is yet another barrier to effective Iraqi involvement in the conflict against Israel despite past and present proclamations of undiminished Iraqi loyalty to the Palestinian cause. Syrian President Hafez Al-Assad's persistent and cynical alliance with Iran may well have transformed the perennial Syrian-Iraqi rivalry into a far more destructive and intractable feud. To paraphrase the words of one senior Iraqi diplomat, it is beyond imagination that Iraqis could now send their sons to fight shoulder-to-shoulder with Syria against Israel. Also, the recent severance of Jordan's ties to the West Bank by King Hussein—Iraq's most reliable and long-standing Arab supporter in its war against Iran—could also complicate the practical aspects of Iraq's support for the Palestinian cause.

Thus, whether one takes the perspective of American policy, Israeli posturing, or inter-Arab unity, there appears to be little likelihood that the prospective cease-fire in the Iran-Iraq war will realistically threaten Israel or facilitate a lasting settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli standoff. The shallowness of American interests in such a settlement should become clearer as the Arabs (and the international community as a whole) are released from the distraction of American diplomatic and military hammering on Iran. Israel can be expected to squeeze maximum political advantage from the danger it ascribes to the Iraqi threat, while the chances of a concrete expression of Iraqi hostility will be quite low indeed. It must perhaps suffice that a Gulf war cease-fire would stop, or at least slow down, the bloodletting in that destructive war. Solid progress on the Palestinian-Israeli issue must be built on other, more proximate developments. ■

Israel can be expected to squeeze maximum political advantage from the danger it ascribes to the Iraqi threat, while the chances of a concrete expression of Iraqi hostility will be quite low indeed.

Dr. Frederick W. Axelgard is a senior fellow in the Middle East Studies program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C.

PROFILE OF A LEADER

FATHER IBRAHIM AYYAD

BY BISHARA A. BAHBAH

Father Ibrahim Ayyad is a Roman Catholic priest and a member of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). He is a member of the Central Council, the PLO's policy-making body, and Chairman Yasser Arafat's special assistant for Latin American affairs.

On his way back from an extensive tour of Latin America, I met Father Ayyad at a friend's house in the suburbs of Washington, D.C.

Although it was late in the evening when I arrived for our meeting, Father Ayyad—short, thin, energetic, soft-spoken and extremely kind—greeted me warmly and wasted no time asking me about the latest news coming out of the Occupied Territories. He had just heard that his home town of Beit Sahour (a small town in the West Bank, about two miles from Bethlehem), had been placed under curfew again.

He said, "I am very proud of my home town and its heroic resistance to the Israeli occupiers. Beit Sahour truly represents the fighting and proud spirit of the Palestinian people."

It was in September of 1913, in Beit Sahour, that Father Ayyad was born. At the age of 14, he entered the Seminary of the Latin Patriarchate in Jerusalem, where he obtained degrees in philosophy, theology, and canon law. In June 1937, Father Ayyad was ordained a priest and appointed editor of the Jerusalem diocese's weekly magazine, *Raqib Sahyoun,* or the "Observer of Zion." At the request of the patriarch (archbishop of Jerusalem), Father Ayyad enrolled in civil law courses at the Institute of Legal Studies, a local branch of the London Faculty of Law. Five years later, he successfully completed his degree.

His first parish was in the town of Ramallah, north of Jerusalem. There he founded the Ahlieh (National) College. At the inauguration of the college, Father Ayyad proclaimed that it was an Arab national college for all Arab youths, regardless of religion or creed. This was the first time in Palestine that weekly holidays for Christian Arab schools became Friday and Sunday, instead of Thursday and Sunday. This change, commented Father Ayyad, "pleased our brethren, the Muslims, but displeased the British director of education in Palestine, who wrote a letter of protest to the patriarch."

In 1945, Father Ayyad was appointed president of the Latin Patriarchal Ecclesiastical Court in Jerusalem, a post he held until July 1951. He was also designated to be a liaison between the Patriarchate, on one hand, and the British administration and the Arab circles, on the other.

In addition, he served as the liaison officer between the Arab authorities and international organizations, such as the Truce Commission, the United Nations Conciliation Commission, and the International Committee of the Red Cross. In these capacities, Father Ayyad stated, "I participated in the discussions with United Nations officials, including the late Count Folke Bernadotte, who was subsequently assassinated by the zionists."

He became involved with the PLO at an early stage. "I was asked to be advisor to the movement on affairs concerning relations between the PLO and Christian

organizations." This role included assisting the papal envoys when dealing with the Palestinian leadership. Currently, Father Ayyad is a member of the working committee of the Christian Peace Conference, an international organization dedicated to promoting peace in the world.

I asked Father Ayyad about the purpose of his most recent Latin American trip which took him to Brazil, Chile, Peru, Honduras, Venezuela, Puerto Rico and Colombia. He replied that he visited Latin America primarily to raise funds for the *Intifadah,* and the trip helped him to keep in touch with the Palestinian communities in Latin America. Father Ayyad then proudly added that during one evening in Chile, he raised $250,000 from 65 wealthy Palestinians. "Those invited but who could not attend sent their contributions anyway," he quickly noted.

Why was Father Ayyad appointed as a special assistant to Chairman Arafat for Latin American affairs? Father Ayyad speaks Spanish. More importantly, the majority of the Palestinian communities residing in Latin America are Christian. They are first and second generation descendants of Palestinians who emigrated from the Christian triangle in Palestine — Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour.

Before allowing for another question, Father Ayyad felt that he had to address the fact that he was chosen to work with the largely Christian community in Latin America. "Please do not misunderstand what I have just stated. I care for all Palestinians equally irrespective of their religion. Allow me to share with you, with pride and humility, what I was able to do for a relatively large Palestinian community in Valencia, Venezuela."

Father Ayyad then proceeded to tell me about the 7,000 Palestinians in Valencia, who are primarily Muslim and who did not have a mosque. In a short period of time, Father Ayyad solicited contributions raising over $300,000. When the funds gathered fell short of the amount needed to build a community mosque, he asked the Saudi ambassador to Venezuela for a $110,000 loan, which was later repaid with a grant by the Islamic Conference.

"Construction of the mosque was completed in 1987," he added with a tone o satisfaction.

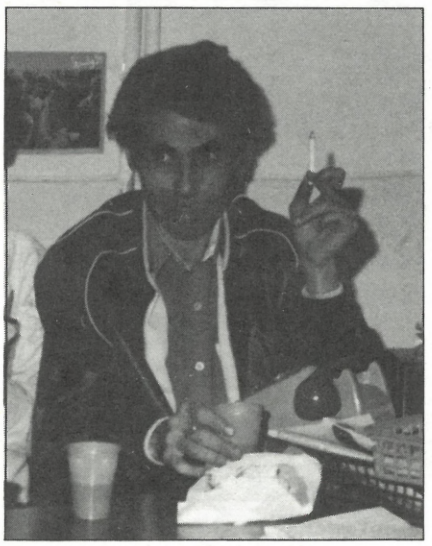
As Father Ayyad and I were parting, he quipped, "I look forward, as all Palestinians do, to the Return." ■

Top Photo: **Father Ayyad greeting PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.** ***Bottom Photo:*** **Father Ayyad with Pope John Paul II one day after the dedication of the Jerusalem patriarchate in January, 1987.**

Bishara A. Babbah is editor-in-chief of The Return.

THE ORDEAL OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE DETAINEE

BY HATEM ABDUL QADER



Hatem Abdul Qader in his *Al-Fajr* office in Jerusalem. Azzam Ubeid

It was shortly after 10:00 pm on Monday, May 2, 1988, when the night watchman at the offices of *Al-Fajr* came to tell me that Israeli intelligence officers had surrounded the building and were demanding that the main door be opened.

At first, I thought that the police and the intelligence service, Shin Bet, had singled out the paper for a thorough search of its offices. Such a search had been mounted two weeks earlier in our offices housing the English-language edition of *Al-Fajr*.

I gave the order to the night watchman to open the door. After barely two minutes, I heard a loud noise on the ground floor, followed by heavy footsteps. Three intelligence officers had broken down the front door and gone up to the top floor.

Armed with pistols and speaking abusively, they demanded the identity cards of every editor without informing us of what it was that they wanted.

After inspecting all the identity cards, everyone's card was returned except mine. They told me I had to go with them to the Russian Compound, the notorious detention center.

I asked, "Why?"

They answered, "You will know everything there."

As I was being led outside, I saw a large number of army troops, intelligence officers, and police officers laying siege to the area. All roads leading to the building had been blocked off.

When I arrived at the Shin Bet interrogation unit in the Russian Compound, I was still at a loss as to why I was being detained. I began imagining all the horrible things that could happen to me. I was made to sit, handcuffed, for about 15 minutes. Suddenly, a Shin Bet officer came and sat facing me. In a very arrogant and abrasive manner he told me, "We know everything about you and your activities in the *Intifadah* . . . ."

I answered, "What do you know and what is the evidence against me?"

He said, "You know everything and it would be best for you to admit everything."

"Admit what?"

"The leaflets of the Unified

National Leadership of the Uprising!"

"What have I got to do with those leaflets?"

"We have information which indicates your participation in their drafting and printing."

"That is not true!"

"We have the evidence."

"What is it—have you shown it to me?"

I cannot reveal it to you. We have secret evidence, and disclosing it could harm the security of the State of Israel."

"How then do you want me to answer to the charges if they are based on secret evidence of which I am not aware? Also, how do you know that the secret evidence about which you are talking is correct?"

Suddenly, the interrogator began using insults. He even began to hit me.

Defiantly I said, "Listen, I have nothing more to say. And if you go too far, I will remain quiet and will not answer a single question, even if you tear me up to pieces." It was past 1:00 am, and I was very tired, but I was able to control myself, and I resolved to challenge that interrogator, no matter what!

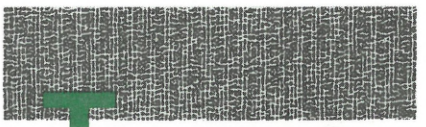
After a while, he left the room for about 15 minutes. When he came back, he told me that on the orders of the minister of defense, I was sentenced to six months of administrative detention. I could not believe what he said, but he handed me the written order. It was true.

I told him, "If there is an order for administrative detention against me, why did you not tell me from the beginning?"

"None of your business."

He then told me to empty my pockets and prepare myself to be taken to a prison cell.

I was carrying some notes with me relating to my work as a journalist—he read them and kept two. He told me an investigation regarding "those two papers" would begin the following day.



The cell, which did not exceed 16 square meters in area, housed around 42 detainees. It contained only 18 mattresses. There was no ventilation save a small window with horizontal and vertical bars, and the air was stifling.

A police officer then led me, in a rude and antagonistic manner, to the prison. My name was taken down and I was confined to Cell No. 14. Cell No. 14 was devoted to "security-threatening" detainees still under investigation by the Shin Bet.

When the warden locked the door of the cell, which looked like a large dungeon, tens of prisoners were awakened. Many of them knew me. They greeted me warmly.

My fellow prisoners made me sit on one of their mattresses while they gathered around to ask how I was doing and the reason for my detention. I told them I had been administratively detained for six months.

The cell, which did not exceed 16 square meters in area, housed around 42 detainees. It contained only 18 mattresses. There was no ventilation save a small window with horizontal and vertical bars, and the air was stifling. The bright lights in the ceiling, which were always on, day and night, contributed to the heat.

Several days elapsed before I adapted to my new surroundings. I found that in the Russian Compound, one feels he is living in another world with its own customs, traditions and discipline. The young detainees bragged that the Israeli intelligence service, despite its brutal and bloody methods, had not yet extracted a single confession from them, and would not. Their morale was higher than what I had expected. On the other hand, the morale of the intelligence service people was very low.

The Russian Compound is distinct from other Israeli jails designated for high-security detainees in that strict discipline prevails. The detention center has a number of "chief" inmates who are in charge of organizing relations among the detainees and who speak to prison authorities about any problems that might come up.

Yet, despite the strict discipline, the Russian Compound soon confirmed its reputation as being among the worst prison facilities. It is overcrowded, it lacks proper ventilation, and detainees are treated very brutally. The wardens beat up the inmates at any time, and often use abusive language and curses.

Most of the detainees were young, barely 20 years of age. Some were being investigated on charges of incitement and taking part in demonstrations; others, for throwing stones; and still others for throwing Molotov cocktails at military vehicles.

On the morning following my incarceration, I was taken to the central court in Jerusalem to have the detention order "legally" endorsed. I was taken in an armored

car, handcuffed and shackled. When I entered the court, an older man approached me and introduced himself in Hebrew, "I am your attorney, Arnold Shfeer, and your newspaper, *Al-Fajr*, has commissioned me to defend you."

Inside the courtroom, Deputy Judge Eliahu Novam, the Israeli prosecutor, and two Shin Bet officers were seated. At the outset of the hearing, the prosecutor asked the judge that the evidence presented against me remain "classified" for security reasons. The prosecutor also asked the judge to issue an injunction barring any lawyer from reading the evidence. My attorney objected, but the judge endorsed the prosecutor's request.

It was decided that a secret hearing would be held, attended by the judge, the Israeli prosecutor, and the intelligence officers with the secret evidence. My attorney was excluded from that session. The hearing lasted over one hour. During that hour I was confined to a solitary cell on the lower floor of the court building.

Finally, I learned that the judge had suffered a "stroke" while looking at the alleged evidence. The hearing was postponed, and I was returned to the Russian Compound.

Later, at about 4:00 pm, one of the wardens called out my name. I put on my shoes and went out with him. At the main gate of the center, I was handcuffed and shackled.

I sat in the same interrogation room. A tall investigator, who displayed that same intolerable combination of arrogance and antagonism that my previous interrogator had, also entered the room. He was soon joined by two others.

The interrogation focused on one of the handwritten pieces of paper that I had with me on the night of my arrest. I said I had the note because, as a journalist, I receive tens of handwritten notes from people asking that they be published.

Our morale was quite high as each detainee felt a sense of responsibility to the others. No interpersonal problems ever arose during my stay. We always felt we were better off than our imprisoned colleagues in Ansar-III [Ketziot] in the Negev. We knew they were suffering in harsher more inhuman conditions.

The intelligence service was not convinced. They believed I had something to do with the note.

After a heated exchange, interspersed with insults and slaps, I told my interrogators that their investigation was unlawful because I was an administrative detainee, and the detention order was issued before that note was found. Combining the investigation of this note with the detention order was not permissible. I also told them that if they wanted to open a probe into the note, I would cooperate provided they annulled the administrative detention order.

Their tone changed after hearing my words. They realized that I was well versed in my legal rights. They asked me to accompany them in a search of my home. At first I objected, but in the end I had no choice.

I was taken in a car, which belonged to the Shin Bet, to my home in the Shu'fat refugee camp, north of Jerusalem. Four military jeeps, two police cars and a personnel carrier trailed us. When we arrived at my home, they laid siege to the area and closed off all the roads leading to it. They entered my home and began a thorough search which lasted over an hour. My parents and ten of my siblings also live in that home.

My accusers did not find a single piece of paper which would have corroborated the "illegality" of the handwritten note and empowered them to press charges. We left my home.

They were dumbfounded. The intelligence officers had expected to find something incriminating, something "valuable." On our way back, one of them told me that they did not believe there was nothing incriminating in my home and that my mother must have destroyed all my materials and equipment after hearing of my arrest.

At about 8:00 pm, I was returned to Cell No. 14, and I told my fellow detainees what had happened.

In a few more days, the court session to endorse my detention order was convened. After a 20-minute discussion in Hebrew, my attorney asked to look at my secret file so he could learn about the evidence against me and formulate my defense.

Again, the judge turned down that request saying that he himself had read the secret file and found material evidence proving my activist role in the Occupied Territories as a member of Fatah, and that I had taken part in the

planning of the *Intifadah*.

My attorney then asked the judge, "If there is such evidence to implicate him, why then do you not try him before the court instead of issuing a detention order?"

The judge replied, "We cannot try him without publicizing the evidence, and the prosecutor does not want to do that for security-related reasons."

After a sterile debate, the judge endorsed the six-month detention order, and demanded that I be immediately transferred to Ramleh prison, to be with the rest of the administrative detainees. In the afternoon of the same day, I was transferred to Ramleh. When we arrived at Ramleh prison, I was placed in Cell No. 13.

From the moment I arrived I felt better. There were 11 administrative detainees from the Jerusalem area whom I knew and with whom I was friends, including Faisal Al-Hussaini. At first, it was difficult to imagine living in such a small room—only 12 square meters—in such poor conditions, with 12 other people. But since I knew most of the other detainees and everyone was considerate of everyone else, living in the room was more tolerable than I had expected.

Just like Cell No. 14 in the Russian Compound, Ramleh prison's Cell No. 13 had hardly any ventilation—just a small window with metal bars and barbed wire. The air was hot, humid and suffocating. We spent 22 hours every day in that room behind a closed door.

The remaining two hours we spent in the prison yard and in the cafeteria. The prison yard, or the "picnic area," covered about 100 square meters. It was surrounded by high concrete walls topped with barbed wire. Every day, we breathed fresh air and exercised for an hour and a half under the sun in the picnic area.

The purpose of imprisoning us is to sow the seed of frustration and despair, in hopes of making us believe that the authorities' hand is strong. But we realized that the opposite was true.

Food in the cafeteria was very bad; it lacked any healthy nutrients. No fruits were ever offered, and meat was served only once a week.

General conditions in Ramleh prison were slightly better than in the Russian Compound; treatment of the detainees was less harsh and crude. The section that we were in consisted of ten cells, one of which was devoted to administrative detainees, and four other cells were used to hold high-security detainees while they awaited trial. The remaining five cells were for those who had committed crimes, both Arabs and Jews. All the administrative and high-security detainees had guides responsible for organizing them and handling their problems.

While there, I learned, in one of the weekly visits by my relatives, that my attorney had submitted an appeal to the Israeli Supreme Court on my behalf. However, it did not raise my hopes since my confidence in the fairness of Israel's judicial system is very weak.

There was great difficulty in passing time inside the cell. We had over 16 hours of idle time, after six hours of sleep. We divided those hours among various activities such as cleaning, washing clothes, playing chess, and engaging in cultural discussions. All 12 detainees were highly educated and included journalists, trade unionists, and professors.

A period of time was also devoted to reading; we had about ten books. However, most of the books that were sent to us were confiscated by the prison authorities. We received the daily papers only when we had visitors.

Our morale was quite high as each detainee felt a sense of responsibility to the others. No interpersonal problems ever arose during my stay. We always felt we were better off than our imprisoned colleagues in Ansar-III [Ketziot] in the Negev. We knew they were suffering in harsher more inhuman conditions.

We were also aware that the arbitrary arrests the Israelis carried out were based on the British Mandate's emergency laws, which Menachem Begin himself labeled "Nazist." Yitzhak Rabin, Israel's minister of defense, was infuriated by the continuation of the Palestinian Uprising and found the British laws to be a simple method to collectively detain any possible leaders. But this measure proved to be a failure: despite 25,000 arrests, the *Intifadah* goes on.

The purpose of imprisoning us is to sow the seeds of frustration and

despair, in hopes of making us believe that the authorities' hand is strong. But we realized that the opposite was true. The Israeli authorities are on the verge of using up their repressive measures, and to no avail. They are still not aware that the *Intifadah* is not tied to a handful of people or masterminds. The *Intifadah* has to do with the resolve of an occupied people to uproot Israel's occupation and to attain its national and legitimate rights, the most important of which is its right to self-determination under the leadership of its sole, legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization.

I had been in jail for about one month when the prison authorities informed me that I had to prepare to travel to Jerusalem in 24 hours. I was scheduled to attend a Supreme Court session to look into my appeal.

My reputable and able attorney, Arnold Shfeer, succeeded in contesting the endorsement of my detention. In the appeal of my administrative detention order, he pinpointed technical flaws which voided my detention.

The order allowed the Israeli occupation authorities to detain me for six months. But when the dates of my arrest and my release were taken into consideration, it was clear that the detention period would have exceeded six months by two days. This additional duration is unlawful and voids the detention order.

Secondly, there was no written statement in my file indicating that the minister of defense had seen the classified material relating to my case and that he had found reasonable cause for issuing the administrative detention order. Israel's emergency laws require the defense minister to sign such an order only after he is apprised of the contents of the secret file.

The decision to release me was made at about 9:00 am on Thursday, June 24, seven and a half weeks after I was taken from my office at *Al-Fajr*.

After the court session was adjourned, I returned to Ramleh prison, as dictated by procedures for my release. When I entered Cell No. 13, my fellow inmates asked about the outcome of the court session. I told them that I had come back only to pack my things and leave. They were surprised and embraced me. I promised to send them the court ruling so they could study it.

Indeed, four days after I left, I met with the lawyers of all the detainees at Ramleh prison, and they proceeded to lodge appeals with the Israeli Supreme Court similar to mine.

Ten days ago, the prosecuting attorney asked those lawyers to withdraw their appeals in return for the release of at least seven of the detainees who have already spent over two thirds of their six-month administrative detention terms behind bars.

Those seven were released last week. ■

Hatem Abdul Qader is the managing editor of the Jerusalem-based Palestinian newspaper, Al-Fajr. *He wrote this article for* The Return *on June 25, 1988, one day after his release from administrative detention.*

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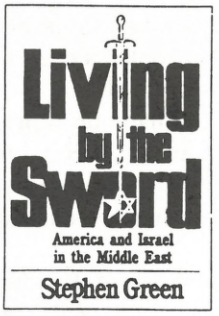

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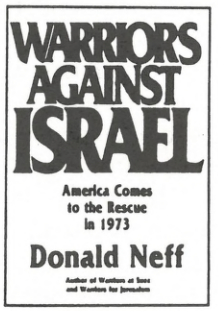

AN INDISPENSABLE BACKGROUND TO TODAY'S MIDDLE EAST HEADLINES!

ISRAEL'S PIRACY ON THE HIGH SEAS

BY JOSEPH SCHECHLA

On April 25, 1988, a special committee commissioned by Tunisian President Zein Al-'Abdeen Ben Ali to investigate the April 16 assassination of Khalil Al-Wazir (Abu Jihad) reported that two of the passports used by the Israeli assassins were those of Lebanese nationals, who themselves were victims of previous Israeli state violence. Of the two, Khalil Kafi (Passport No. 489499), was the victim of a February 22, 1985, Israeli raid on his home in Surah Village, South Lebanon. His passport was among the items the Israeli forces confiscated from his home.

The other passport (Passport No. 410199) bore the name of Najib Rashad Churyah, a mechanic aboard a Lebanese-flagged ship seized by the Israeli navy in waters off Cyprus. The ship was on a commercial run between Limassol and Lebanon in the summer of 1984 when the ship's captain, Abd Al-Jalil Bizin, was detained and charged with being affiliated with a Palestinian organization. The crew was also reportedly detained and released after Israeli authorities confiscated all personal documents.

These facts represent the three consistent methods of Israeli state violence imposed upon Palestinian and Lebanese civilians. The first method, the long-standing policy of selective assassinations, such as the commando murder of Abu Jihad, may receive a good deal of press coverage depending on the circumstances, or it may not. The regular raids on population centers in South Lebanon—before, during and after the 1982 invasion—have received regular coverage, but the coverage is often low-profile. Still, the third category of state violence, kidnapping and piracy at sea, remains the least reported of all.

On November 16, 1987, Israel conducted at least its fourteenth hijacking at sea in three years. Israeli military sources admitted seizing the Honduran-flagged merchant ship, *Nadija*. The *Nadija* was sailing in the Mediterranean Sea from Limassol to Port Said, Egypt, bound for the Suez Canal and North Yemen. These same Israeli military sources confirmed that "several" men were taken from the *Nadija* by force and interrogated for possible membership in a Palestinian organization. Official Israeli sources refused to divulge more information, including the identities of the crewmen, believed to be held in Israel's Jalamah prison with no charges.

Less than two weeks before the *Nadija* incident, the Israeli navy stopped a ship bound for Tyre, Lebanon, presumably in Lebanese territorial waters. One man was kidnapped from the ship and taken to an undisclosed destination inside Israel. Lebanese authorities have identified him as Hilal Bitar.

In international waters, on February 12, 1986, Israeli gunboats chased and fired upon a Turkish vessel, *Laroz I*, killing its Turkish captain. The boat was forced to dock in the Israeli harbor of Ashdod, and the surviving 15-member crew was detained. Due to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs' protests, seven Turkish crewmen were subsequently released on February 17. The fate of eight crewman, reportedly of Palestinian nationality, remains unconfirmed.

Alisur Blanco, a Cypriot ferryboat carrying 63 passengers was hijacked

Between March 1985 and November 1987, the Israeli navy has captured as many as 20 boats and ships, including fishing vessels, outside Israel's territorial waters.

by Israeli forces off the coast of Lebanon on June 29, 1984. Israeli authorities arrested and detained some of its passengers, and by July 1, nine were reported still in detention. Those kidnapped at sea and held by Israeli state forces included a young Lebanese schoolboy, Mazin Masri, who was *en route* from his school in England to Lebanon for a holiday with his family. Three weeks later, on July 18, the Israeli government claimed to have acted "in self-defense" in the *Alisur Blanco* hijacking. It acknowledged that two young passengers of Palestinian nationality, believed to be brother and sister, were still being held on suspicion that they were "plotting against Israel."

Of the numerous cases recently investigated by a Jerusalem-based human rights group, the Committee against State Terrorism at Sea, only one vessel, the Panamanian-registered *Ataveros*, appeared to have been sailing in the direction of Israel. However, this ship was attacked by an Israeli gunboat and sunk in international waters around midnight on April 20, 1985. According to survivors' accounts, about 20 men believed to be of Palestinian nationality were killed in the attack. Israeli authorities confirmed recovering only four bodies.

Specific motives for most of the known cases of Israeli sea piracy and kidnapping over the past few years remain vague. The locus of Israeli attacks on shipping—mostly in waters around Cyprus and Lebanon—and the fact that most of their victims are Palestinian, suggests that Israeli sea kidnapping and piracy conforms with the standard policy of disrupting all aspects of life for the indigenous people of the area.

The timing of certain acts is also relevant. For example, several small boats were seized and their crews abducted off the coast of Lebanon in the autumn months of 1986. The acts coincided with raids by Amal forces on Palestinian refugee camps in southern Lebanon. Those vessels suspected of carrying men, supplies, or relief materials (including food, medicines and blood supplies) were impounded, apparently in order to aid further the destruction of the Palestinian population and its defenses in the camp war.

According to the Arab and international press, between March 1985 and November 1987, the Israeli navy has captured as many as 20 boats and ships, including fishing vessels, outside Israel's territorial waters. In at least 14 of these cases—and certainly others before 1985, as in the *Alisur Blanco* case—passengers have been arrested and taken prisoner. Some have been placed on trial; some have been later disposed of by expulsion or deportation; some have been killed (*Ataveros*), many have been tortured; and the fate of others is yet unknown. According to detailed evidence recently issued in a report of the Committee against State

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Terrorism at Sea, these actions constitute a deliberate pattern of state terrorism at sea, whereby the Israeli state systematically kidnaps those it suspects may violate its own domestic laws or oppose its policies. Thus, in the conclusions of the report, "Israel consistently violates international laws and conventions, and is transforming the Mediterranean Sea into a lawless zone."*

Much of the specific information on these cases and the details of detention of those kidnapped at sea are available thanks to the efforts of Jerusalem's Arab Studies Society Director Faisal Al-Hussaini and Palestinian lawyer Walid Fahoum. During his term in Ramleh prison under a three-month administrative detention order in 1987, Hussaini was able to interview victims of Israel's sea-jacking. Thirty-seven such victims were also held at Ramleh prison while he was there. Additional facts were obtained from the charge sheets of the Israeli military prosecutor to the court. Walid Fahoum conducted vital legal research, careful investigation, and interviews in order to establish the pattern of this method of state violence directed toward Palestinian nationals.

The issue of terrorism at sea has been a subject of current efforts of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) toward drafting an international convention for the suppression of unlawful acts against the safety of marine navigation. The IMO and its drafting committee have been vigilant in investigating the potential acts of terrorism at sea committed by individuals or other non-state groups. However, the draft convention still fails to address the phenomenon of state terrorism at sea which, though uncommon among most states, is a regular practice of the state of Israel.

One remotely possible reason for the IMO's oversight is much less the result of selective indictment as it might be due to the paucity of press attention to these spectacular acts of piracy in violation of international law. With few exceptions, such incidents—forming part of a historical pattern—escape world attention. The few exceptions to this include the reaction of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the *Laroz I* capture and murder of its captain (published widely in the Turkish press), and official reactions within the Australian government to the gun-point seizure and impounding of the Australian-flagged touring yacht, *Casselardit*, on August 30, 1985. In the *Casselardit* incident, eight passengers were detained and imprisoned in Israel without charges or trial. Reports of Israel's February 1988 bombing in Cyprus of the ship *Al-Awdah* (The Return), chartered by the PLO to carry returning Palestinians to Haifa harbor, indicates, however symbolically, an area of Israeli policy deserving of world attention. Israel's continuing selective abduction, imprisonment and torture of Palestinians and others on the high seas remains one of the least scrutinized methods of Israel's state terrorism. ■

*Committee against State Terrorism at Sea, *State Terrorism at Sea: A Preliminary Report on the Case of Israel* (Chicago: Data Base Project on Palestinian Human Rights; and Washington: EAFORD, March 1988), p. 6 (available from EAFORD, 2025 Eye Street, NW, Suite 1020, Washington, DC 20006, at $1.00 per copy).

Joseph Schechla is director (USA) of The International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (EAFORD) and editor of Without Prejudice, *the EAFORD international review of racial discrimination.*

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THE INTIFADAH AS I SAW IT

BY JOHN LAW

I went to the West Bank and Gaza during the last week of July because I had not been there since the *Intifadah* began. It is not that I was out of touch with what had been happening since December, but I knew that I had to go and see what was happening for myself.

Like other Americans who were not taking extended vacations in the Gobi desert or in Siberia, I was able to see the beatings, maimings, and killings on prime time television. And since the Middle East is my consuming interest, as well as my bread and butter, I had also probed far more deeply than most Americans by talking with specialists, reading all the news reports, and consulting my books and files. But it was still not enough. To get any feeling of confidence in my knowledge of what was happening in the Occupied Territories and what was likely to happen next, I simply had to go there.

My visit of just under ten days was short, but nonetheless, I came away with a firm conviction: The *Intifadah* is not going to be brought to an end by Israel. It will end only when the Palestinians decide to end it. And the earliest this can happen will be the day, however distant, when Israel commits itself to ending the occupation.

In view of Israel's enormous military power and the Israeli government's pledge to quell the Palestinian Uprising with an "iron fist," it may seem to many people in the United States, that this is an exaggerated conviction.

When you are on the ground, however, you become aware of two key factors. First of all, even the Israeli armed forces are not big enough to control the actions of the 1.5 million Palestinians who inhabit the 400 villages and camps of the West Bank and Gaza. By putting communities under siege or under direct military occupation, they can exert *some* control over *some* of the people *some* of the time, but they cannot control *all* of the people *all* of the time. Eventually, a siege or occupation in one locale has to be lifted so that the soldiers can deal with a "problem area" somewhere else. For the Israelis, it is like rushing from one brush fire to another in an attempt to control a whole forest fire. Actually it is worse, because as soon as you leave a place where you thought you had quenched the fire, it reignites, burning brightly again.

None of this would be taking place, however, without a second factor. There appears to be an indomitable spirit of resistance to Israeli occupation. "Indomitable" is a strong word, and I could never have used it had I not come to the Occupied Territories and spent long day after long day visiting camps, villages and towns, talking to a number of people from a broad segment of the population (yes, I do speak and understand Arabic).

Ever since 1967, and now with increasing intensity, Palestinians of all classes and occupations have suffered harassment, humiliation, intimidation, deprivation of land and property, imprisonment, torture, deportation, physical injury and violent death—to the point where it is now almost impossible to meet someone who has not been a victim of this oppression, or who does not have a friend or family member currently in prison.

Three communiqués have been issued by the leaders of the Uprising

The streets of Jerusalem during a strike. John Law

extolling, in sometimes lofty language, the enduring nature of their struggle. However, people outside of the Occupied Territories tend to have problems believing what they hear in communiqués. Some doubts remain until you go there and see for yourself. When you do go, what you find is anger and defiance, and a willingness to die rather than submit. You hear them say it, but you also see it in their eyes. You see it in the eyes of the dignified matron whose charitable institution has just been closed down by the Israeli authorities. She tells you, "We want our independence and we are ready to die to get it. Let them kill me." You see it in the eyes of the former restaurant cook who is on the "Popular Committee" of his village and says, "The *Intifadah* is now my life. We want the Israelis out of the West Bank. I am ready to die for this." The same goes for the student in Gaza who says, "Independence or death. That's the choice." You have to hear him and see him in order to fully appreciate his passion and sincerity.

Of course, there is another

What you find is anger and defiance, and a willingness to die rather than submit. You hear them say it, but you also see it in their eyes.

choice for many West Bankers and Gazans: leave the Occupied Territories for good; find a new home abroad. It does not take much headwork to figure out that this is what Israel would prefer to see as a solution to the problem. It has long been clear that the myriad of laws regulating travel by West Bankers have been designed to encourage permanent absence.

But Israel's primary means of encouraging emigration is to make life as difficult as possible and to carry out random harassment and humiliation. Making life difficult can include the confiscation of a person's land, the closing down of his university, the boarding up of the institution for which he works, or the arbitrary raising of his taxes to drive him out of business. Random harassment or deliberate humiliation can mean anything from making you wait in a police station courtyard for eight hours in the summer sun while they "check" to see if you paid your taxes, to slapping your children around while you stand there and watch.

I talked to a great number of people who had endured this kind

Um Kamal Tarazi mourning her martyred son Khalil. John Law

of harassment and even worse, but I found not one during this visit who expressed any intention whatsoever of leaving the Occupied Territories to start a new life elsewhere. Some of them are in a position to do it easily, and might have considered it seriously before the *Intifadah*—but not now. The prosperous operator of a travel business told me, "Leave? I'll never give the Israelis the satisfaction!" An affluent medical doctor says, "The Israelis want us to leave. That's exactly why I and my family will stay." I have heard bartenders and taxi drivers also expressing such thoughts.

It is in the camps that life is the hardest, yet you find the same unconquerable spirit there. Between December 9 and July 1 (236 days) in Jalazoun camp, near Ramallah, residents experienced 136 days of siege and curfew. Most people of the camp are workers; they ended up spending all their savings while trapped in the camp. It grew so bad at times during the winter that they burned their furniture and their shoes to keep warm. Tragedy still strikes routinely.

I visited a family in Jalazoun one morning whose son had been taken away during a night raid only a few hours earlier. Soldiers had broken in, clubbed the boy's mother and sister (see photo on page 00), and dragged the boy off, hitting him as they went. One could still see the boy's blood splattered on the flagstones outside the front door.

Nowhere is the spirit of indomitability demonstrated more clearly than in some of the West Bank villages that call themselves "liberated." Kufr Malek, about ten miles northeast of Jerusalem, is one of them. For three weeks in May, after the Israeli occupation authorities had sent a force of 2,500 troops to subdue recalcitrant villagers who had been playing cat and mouse with Israeli troops for months, Kufr Malek was under siege. The troops prevented its inhabitants from leaving, cut off their electricity, banned the transportation of food and medicines, and allowed armed Israeli civilian settlers to strut provocatively through the village under army protection. But even this did not stop these villagers from throwing their stones (with an accuracy inherited from generations of Kufr Malek shepherds who used this handy weapon to keep their flocks under control).

Finally, on May 22, the Israeli troops declared "victory" and left. Within minutes, village youths were out on the main square, stringing up the red, white, black, and green flags that so infuriated their late occupiers. Now, when you enter the square, you see dozens and dozens of these Palestinian flags flying overhead. Israeli settlers, three of whom were seriously wounded earlier in the Uprising when they drove into the village and began shooting, do not come here anymore. Occasionally, an Israeli military vehicle enters the village square, finds itself in a hailstorm of stones and turns back.

The place sure looks liberated to me. ■

John Law is a former Middle East bureau chief for U.S. News and World Report *and the founder of the* Washington Report on Middle East Affairs. *He also serves on the editorial board of* The Return.

THE DEMOCRATS AND THE PALESTINIANS

BY JOHN EGAN

When Dr. James Zogby mounted the podium to address the Democratic party's convention in Atlanta on July 19, he was ending one struggle and beginning a new one. Zogby, executive director of the Washington, D.C.-based Arab American Institute (AAI), and an advisor to then-presidential candidate Jesse Jackson, withdrew the Jackson campaign's minority plank on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, but not before underscoring the historic importance of the moment.

"We're making history today. Today the issue of Palestinian rights is being debated by our party. The deadly silence that has for so long submerged the issue of Palestinian rights has been shattered," Zogby began.

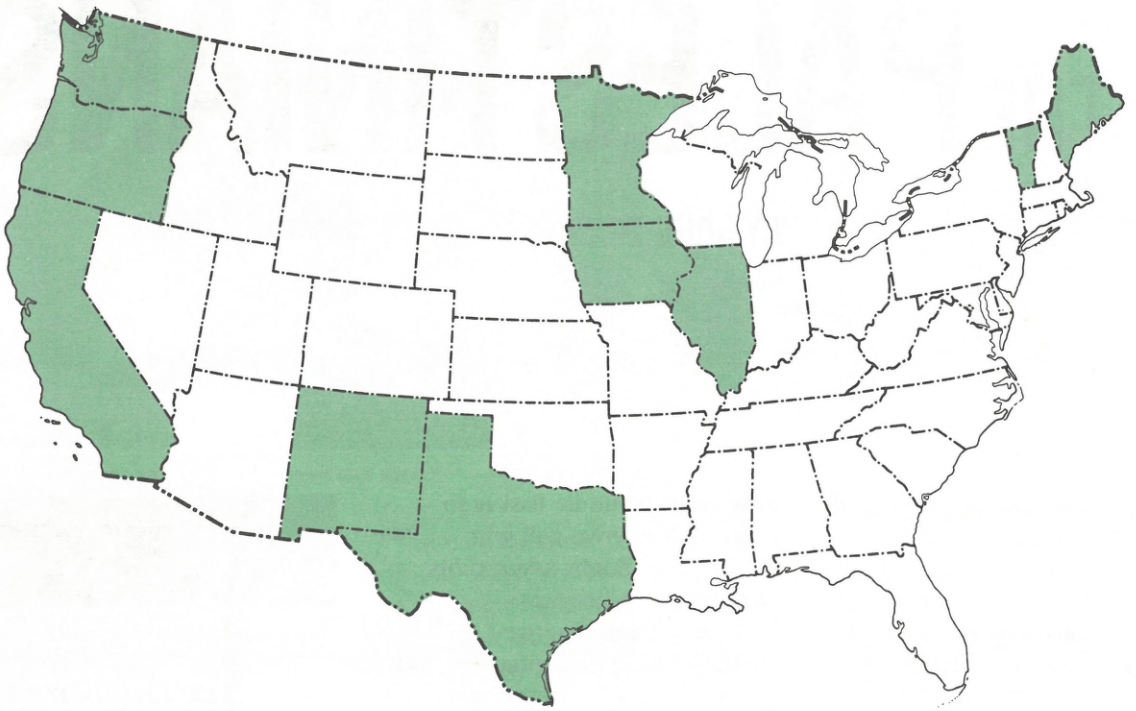
The Jackson minority plank on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict was a "debate about principle" and an attempt to move beyond "the failed policy of Camp David," which did not directly address Palestinian rights, Zogby told the delegates. He withdrew the minority plank that mid-July day in Atlanta, "but because we are right, and because peace in the Middle East is so urgent, I know we will win . . . . We will return," Zogby assured his Democratic colleagues.

Senator Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii) and Representative Charles Schumer (D-New York), two unwavering supporters of Israel, followed Zogby and did their best to discredit his plea for Palestinian rights. However, their speeches were listless and predictable pro-Israel recitations, and they averted Zogby's moral challenge, much the same way the Democratic party had avoided Jesse Jackson's insistent call for supporting Palestinian national aspirations. The audience in Atlanta mixed boos and applause for the two pro-Israel legislators, and at one point House Speaker Jim Wright (D-Texas) had to interrupt the boos and remind the delegates that Schumer had a right to speak.

"There are those who seek to silence this debate, to pretend it isn't happening," Zogby said in Atlanta. "But pressure and intimidation work only in the short run. They may cause fear among some, but they do not win friends in the end."

The Democratic party had never even debated Palestinian rights as part of the party's platform on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, but determined grass-roots organizing resulted in ten states passing pro-Palestinian resolutions.

States in which the Democratic party has adopted pro-Palestinian resolutions



Two things made Zogby's address to the Democratic convention possible: his capacity as a foreign-policy advisor to the Jackson campaign in 1984 and 1988, and AAI's "Vote 88" project. That project began in March 1987 and ultimately involved over 10,000 Arab Americans in the political process. Arab Americans helped draft an issues agenda, ran for delegate seats, and registered to vote. The process produced an AAI issue paper—*Arab Americans: Who We Are and What We Want*—as well as thousands of newly active participants in the American political system.

The Democratic party had never even debated Palestinian rights as part of the party's platform on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, but determined grass-roots organizing resulted in ten states passing pro-Palestinian resolutions. With one-fifth of the fifty states taking a public position on Palestinian rights, debate of some sort was all but inevitable at the Democratic convention.

In 1984 there were less than half a dozen Arab-American delegates at the Democratic party convention in San Francisco, but over 50 Arab Americans attended this Democratic convention as delegates.

During the presidential primary campaign, Washington State, Vermont, Illinois, Maine, and Oregon passed resolutions explicitly calling for an independent Palestinian state. Meanwhile, state Democratic conventions in Texas, Iowa, and Minnesota passed planks calling for Palestinian self-determination without mentioning statehood. In addition, California's Democratic party said the Palestinians have the right to control their own fate, and an Iowa

resolution affirmed the rights of Palestinians and Israelis to a homeland. At the last Democratic convention, only Washington State had a resolution supporting Palestinian rights.

In 1984 there were less than half a dozen Arab-American delegates at the Democratic party convention in San Francisco, but over 50 Arab Americans attended this Democratic convention as delegates or as members of the Democratic National Committee's (the DNC's) platform, rules and credentials committees—another historic achievement, noted Sally Ethelston, an aide to Jim Zogby.

Whereas Democratic party presidential nominee Walter Mondale returned campaign contributions to Arab Americans in 1984, over 500 people attended a reception in Atlanta sponsored by the Arab American Democratic Federation and other nationally prominent Arab Americans.

What is to prevent an erosion of concern for Palestinian rights now that the Democratic party has left Atlanta? As part of a compromise with Massachusetts governor Michael Dukakis, Jackson delegates received 15 seats on the DNC, and Ruth Ann Skaff, a Jackson delegate from Texas, was chosen to fill a Jackson seat on the DNC's executive committee. According to Dr. Zogby, "By selecting an Arab American, Jackson has helped to assure that the gains we made in the Democratic party this year will be retained."

"Atlanta was neither the beginning nor the end—it was part of the process," said AAI's Ethelston. "This process was begun in a concrete way last year, and it is not going to stop just because we got something onto the floor of the Democratic convention," she said. "We want to see the debate continue."

[The following are excerpts from *The Los Angeles Times* and Cable News Network (CNN) poll conducted from July 18 to 21, 1988. The poll surveyed all 4,203 Democratic Party delegates who attended the Democratic National Convention.]

Do you think the United States government should step up its military aid to Israel, or keep it at about the same level, or do you think the government should not cut down military aid to Israel?

Step up military aid	5%
Keep at about the same level	59%
Cut down military aid	36%

Do you favor or oppose giving the Palestinians a homeland in the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip?

Favor	70%
Oppose	30%

Here are the names of some more people and institutions that are often in the news. Once again, what is your general impression about each of them—or haven't you heard enough about them to make a judgment?

The government of Israel:

Very favorable	11%
Somewhat favorable	47%
Somewhat unfavorable	29%
Very unfavorable	8%
Haven't heard enough about	5%

In your opinion, how much emphasis should be placed on our government's policy in the Middle East as an issue in the Presidential election campaign? Should it be:

The most important issue	6%
An important issue	76%
A minor issue	18%

Some people say that either Jesse Jackson or some of his supporters are unfriendly to Jews and to the State of Israel. Do you think Jackson can be accused of anti-Semitism or don't you think that charge is justified?

Yes, Jackson can be accused of anti-semitism	21%
No, Jackson cannot be accused of anti-semitism	79%

As they move toward fuller participation in the American political system, Arab Americans would do well to remember an ancient political adage that has been at the core of Zionist political organizing in this country for over 30 years: Politics is the art of the possible, and success in the political arena is measured by one's accomplishments, not one's beliefs. ■

John Egan, a journalist based in Washington, D.C., was managing editor of The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs *in 1986-87.*

JAPAN VENTURES INTO THE PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI ARENA

BY JANE HUNTER

Japanese Foreign Minister Sosuke Uno's June 26 visit to Israel was brief—it was just 22 hours at the end of a swing through Syria, Jordan and Egypt. But it was significant in that it marked not only the first visit of a Japanese minister to Israel, but also Japan's first venture into international politics as an economic superpower.

Japan, with the world's most robust economy and the world's biggest trade surplus, recently announced it would contribute $50 billion to developing countries over the next five years. Previously Tokyo had focused rather narrowly on the promotion of Japanese trade, but now it is moving to "globalize" its diplomacy.

The Israelis, who had been eagerly anticipating Uno's visit since it was announced in May, quickly discovered that Japan's chief diplomat takes his country's new role seriously—more seriously, in fact, than the role of gracious guest.

Uno spent more time meeting with Palestinian figures and touring a West Bank refugee camp than he spent in meetings with Israeli leaders. And rather than ceremoniously commending his hosts on their efforts for peace, he mortified them with the surprise announcement of a new Japanese policy that conditioned any improvement in Japanese-Israeli relations upon Israeli progress toward peace.

When he visited Dheishe refugee camp, the Japanese foreign minister told residents, "I am fully aware of your indefatigable way of life under the difficult conditions in the refugee camp, and of the severe situation in the West Bank and Gaza since last December," when the Palestinian uprising began. He made an immediate pledge of $500,000 to finance the construction of a community center and to support ongoing United Nations relief programs. Afterwards, Uno told Israeli officials that he was horrified at the conditions he had seen at Dheishe.

Uno then met with six Palestinians from the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Jerusalem. He opened the meeting, held in the American Colony Hotel in East Jerusalem, by reading a statement summarizing Japan's positions. These include the recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, their right to an independent state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and the recognition of the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people. The statement also expressed Japan's support for an international peace conference and PLO participation in that conference. Japan has consistently called for Israel's immediate withdrawal from the Occupied Territories and has characterized some of its occupation policies as violations of international law.

Uno received a memorandum from the six Palestinian leaders, detailing the behavior of the Israeli military in the Occupied Territories, and urging Japan to play an active part in the peace process. During their discussion, the Palestinians asked Uno to press the Reagan administration into meeting with Chairman Yasser Arafat of the PLO.

Aware that the Reagan administration had encouraged Japan to involve itself in the Middle East, Israeli officials had anticipated that, just as U.S. economic aid had

brought Egypt into the Camp David peace process with Israel a decade ago, Japan would simply stand in for Washington, currently in economic straits, and furnish the money that might make a peace treaty with Jordan possible; perhaps the Japanese might also act as a U.S. back channel to Syria.

For themselves, the Israelis had expected that Uno's visit would inaugurate a new era in Israeli-Japanese relations. Japan has had diplomatic relations with Israel since 1952, but under its former policy of focusing its diplomacy where there were large consumer markets to be tapped, Tokyo never added substance to the shell of formal recognition. The only bilateral agreement Japan and Israel have ever signed covers the exchange of scientists.

Most galling to Israel is that Japan's leading corporations have consistently adhered to the long-running boycott against Israel organized by Arab states. Japan has refused to market its goods in Israel. Israel and its U.S. supporters hold the Japanese government responsible for this state of affairs, arguing that Japan has not followed its Western partners in denouncing the boycott or passing legislation against it. Japanese companies, they say, habitually follow Japanese government policy.

Israel, therefore, expected that Uno's visit would serve as a green light for Japanese corporations to do business in Israel. Japan's gradual warming to Israel over the last several years made it all the more reasonable to anticipate that Uno's coming meant the boycott would be lifted.

In 1985, then-Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir paid an official state visit to Japan; several other Israeli ministers have visited since then. Last fall a high-level trade delegation led by the president and the executive vice-chairman of the Keidanren (the Japan Federation of Economic Organizations) visited Israel, and an Israeli trade delegation visited Japan in June. Last year the Japanese government sponsored a Japanese cultural week in Israel.

The thaw in relations was attributed to the easier availability of oil, which made Japan less dependent on oil-producing countries in the Middle East, and also, as Japan expanded its marketing system to Asia, Africa and the Americas, to the decreasing importance of Arab consumers, who once comprised 10% of Japan's export market but now take only 4% of Japan's exports. Moreover, by pursuing closer ties with Israel, Tokyo hoped to mollify critics of its trade policies in the U.S. Congress.

Then Japan suddenly shifted gears and embarked on its new activist foreign policy. To Israel's

Uno spent more time meeting with Palestinian figures and touring a West Bank refugee camp than he spent in meetings with Israeli leaders.

Sousuke Uno, Japan's Minister for Foreign Affairs

Koichi Tsutsumi, Japan's ambassador in Israel, said that the Middle East ranked as a "high fourth" priority of Japanese foreign policy (after "strengthening the Free World," relations with the U.S. and Western Europe, and affairs in East Asia).

misfortune, it singled out the Middle East for special attention. Koichi Tsutsumi, Japan's ambassador in Israel, said that the Middle East ranked as a "high fourth" priority of Japanese foreign policy (after "strengthening the Free World," relations with the U.S. and Western Europe, and affairs in East Asia) because of Japan's reliance on oil from the region and the possibility that continued instability could make the Middle East "the starting point of the next world war."

Apparently following the recent example of the USSR under the leadership of General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, Japan has deliberately engaged all the Middle East players. When he met with Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, Foreign Minister Uno pressed him for changes in Israel's occupation policies. He reiterated Japan's policy for Shamir: Israel should recognize the Palestinian right to self-determination and Arab governments should recognize Israel.

When Uno visited Syria earlier in his tour, he urged Damascus to be flexible on the subject of the Shultz proposal (Secretary of State George Shultz's proposal calls for a ceremonial international conference and a settlement that does not include an independent Palestinian state). When he met with the six Palestinians in East Jerusalem, he told them that Japan had raised the issue of an international conference at the recent Toronto summit of industrialized nations and had expressed disagreement with the Reagan administration on the subject of PLO participation in such a meeting.

Israeli officials, who had publicly voiced their hopes that Uno might announce massive Japanese investment in Israel, technological cooperation, direct air links, and a bilateral agreement with an economic committee to monitor economic and trade ties, were obviously caught off guard when the foreign minister said these things would come only after progress on peace.

The linkage between peace and improved relations, said Israeli Foreign Ministry Director-General Avraham Tamir, was an "unacceptable new element," which Israel would have to fight. The rebuff was all the more stinging because during his visits to Syria and Jordan Uno had promised both countries financial assistance and increased Japanese investment. Japanese officials pointed out that Israel, as a developed country, would not be eligible for the new Japanese aid programs.

Publicly, Israeli leaders reacted as if they had not heard Uno—or did not believe what he was saying. After a tough session with his Japanese counterpart, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said he expected the Japanese government would "reconsider" its positions. As if oblivious to Uno's stress on Israel's treatment of the Palestinians under occupation, Peres said that Japan had not conditioned its economic relations with Arab governments on the absence of peace. Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir rejected Uno's call for a peace conference with PLO participation and urged that Japan use some of the $50 billion it plans to allocate to developing nations for an "international effort" to "resettle" Palestinian refugees. Chaim Herzog, the Israeli president, suggested that Uno differentiate between the political and "humanitarian" problems of the Palestinians and simply adopt a refugee camp and rehabilitate it.

Avraham Tamir, the director-general of the Israeli foreign ministry, contended that, in private talks with Israeli officials, the Japanese have actually endorsed the Shultz plan and a Palestinian confederation with Jordan. He said that Japan's demands for a withdrawal from the Occupied Territories and a Palestinian state are merely to please Arab governments.

Arab governments did voice complaints about Uno's visit, saying it would be regarded as support for Israel. But after consultations with

several Arab diplomats, a Japanese foreign ministry spokesman said, "they understand the importance that Japanese foreign policy attaches to visiting both sides at the same time."

Yoel Marcus, a leading columnist for the major Israeli daily *Ha'aretz*, was probably revealing the true Israeli reaction when he wrote that Uno "had manage[d] to slap us in the face seven times in one day."

Despite its wounded pride, however, Israel had several reasons for the cordial sendoff it gave Uno. The humiliations of the boycott aside, Japan is already an important trading partner for Israel—its third largest export market, after the U.S. and Europe. Israeli exports to Japan are expected to amount to $700 million this year. Although polished diamonds, which have a relatively low value added (margin of profit) represent two-thirds of that figure, on paper Israel occupies a unique niche: it has a favorable trade balance with Japan. If Israel itself is not eligible for Japanese foreign aid, it is almost certainly interested in participating in Japan's overseas aid programs. Israeli personnel already work on U.S. and European-funded projects in developing countries. The programs allow Israel to make political contacts in countries where it has no diplomatic relations and to develop intelligence networks.

Uno, too, made the parting an amicable one. After insisting that such a thing would not be allowed, he let Foreign Minister Shimon Peres ride with him in his car to the airport and the two embraced when they parted. Ambassador Tsutsumi described Uno's visit as "a beginning" of Japanese involvement in the Middle East peace process. ■

Jane Hunter is editor of the monthly publication Israeli Foreign Affairs.

BY JANE HUNTER

NEWS IN BRIEF ISRAEL AND THE WORLD

NEW ZEALAND

In a low-key protest against Israel's harsh response to the Palestinian Uprising, New Zealand has appointed a new nonresident ambassador to Israel, but it has instructed him to indefinitely postpone presenting his credentials until, in the words of the country's foreign minister, "Israel made some serious attempt to resolve the current impasse. "New Zealand is not alone. Because of the *Intifadah*, Greece, Portugal, Ireland, and Poland have all postponed plans to upgrade diplomatic relations with Israel. In Denmark, supermarkets are boycotting Israeli products.

PROGRESSIVE SOUTH AFRICANS

After its invitations to anti-apartheid leaders Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Reverand Allan Boesak were turned down, Israel was delighted that Dr. Nthato Motlana, president of the Soweto Civic Association, agreed to visit. Israel was even happier when Motlana said that the Palestinian situation could not be compared to the plight of blacks in South Africa. However, both the African National Congress and other organizations in the United Democratic Front (the "UDF" is the major *internal* anti-apartheid organization recently banned by Pretoria) with which Motlana's association is affiliated, condemned the visit. In an open letter to the PLO and the Palestinian people, the other UDF affiliates said that Motlana spoke only for himself: "The UDF has prior to its banning always supported the struggles of oppressed people for national liberation . . . . Hence its support for the Palestinian struggle under the leadership of the PLO."

HONDURAS

Israel will increase its already large presence in Honduras with a new series of development programs, announced the Israeli ambassador to Honduras. The programs will be carried out in conjunction with the planning, coordination and budgeting and natural resources ministries.

AFSCME

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, (AFSCME) one of the nation's largest unions, is also the first to pass a resolution in support of an international conference for peace in the Middle East. Passed at the union's convention in Los Angeles in July, the resolution also condemns the Israeli government's treatment of Palestinians under occupation. ■

ROOTS, *from page 7*
savage unleashing of Israel's state terrorism. The brutality of Israeli repression, graphically exhibited on American and European television, dramatically contrasts with the spirit, civil tactics, and humanity of the Palestinian resistance.

The Intifadah in Retrospect

This historic Uprising, even if it ends today, has significantly changed the political equation of the region. By their actions and their words, the Palestinians under occupation have reaffirmed Palestinian unity and the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. King Hussein of Jordan, long encouraged by the United States and Israel to represent the Palestinians, removed himself and his government from the role of spokesman/negotiator for the Palestinian people. Perhaps for the first time, in Resolution 608, the United Nations Security Council defined the Occupied Territories of the West Bank and Gaza as Palestinian national territory. The Uprising has brought the Palestine question to the superpower summit in Moscow. Further, it has caused the lifting of the siege of the Palestinian camps in Beirut, Lebanon and initiated changes and realignments in intra-Arab politics, all in support of the people's struggle and the PLO. And not least, it has had a profound impact on the Israeli polity and political culture as well as on international Jewish public opinion.

In the end, the Uprising has set the minimum that the PLO and the rest of the world must accept as a solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict: there must be an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. ■

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ANSAR-III, *from page 12*
with two centimeters of foam. The doctor's reply was, "It's not my business."

At the direction of the Red Cross physician, Aryan was taken twice to Beersheva for X-rays, where he was finally told his problem was his age. For the next 40 days he lay in his bed, surrounded by fellow prisoners who gave him water, entertained him with stories or conversation, and assisted him to the latrine. Aryan describes that fellowship as the most impressive aspect of his prison experience.

When the prison guards came one night and read Aryan's name from a list of 41 to be released, the prisoners cheered. And, as with every man set free from Ansar-III, the prisoners gave Aryan a message: "To every decent human being, we appeal for the closure of Ansar-III, where men live in physical conditions below the standards of animals, but they live with high spirits."

Today, Izzedin Aryan is 30 kilograms [66 lbs.] thinner. From Ansar-III he came to Ramallah where he was taken directly to the hospital. He remained there for more than a week. He has asked for permission to travel to the United States or Europe for rehabilitation of his back. Asked why he chooses to speak out, given the risks involved, he replied, "There are approximately 3,000 prisoners still suffering in that place. We cannot close our mouths, whether they [the Israelis] like it or not. If they're ashamed then they must improve the situation."

As for political questions, Aryan defers to the "experts within the PLO whose job it is to find the solution." His politics, he assures me, have been reinforced by his experience, not altered. ■

Kate Casa is a correspondent for The Return *in Jerusalem.*

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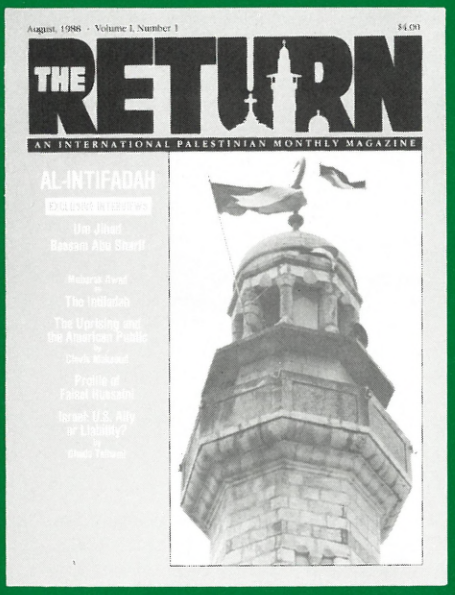

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